

# Women Shaping Europe

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**Alice-Mary Higgins**

**Policy Officer**

**National Women's Council of Ireland**



# Europe

‘Europe’ not one entity but an ongoing debate

- between social and economic
- between different interpretations and approaches to society or economy.
- Between ideologies e.g. left-wing or neo-liberal
- Short term demands and long term vision ( Europe 2020)
- Structures, process, rules and mandate
- Priorities and principles, commitments and compromise.
- Shifting power balances between and within institutions and bodies (ECB, Council, Commission, EU Parliament)
- Legislation, legal structures and courts.

**Women’s voices and gender analysis are crucial to debate**

# Reproductive Rights

- 1989-91 Distribution of Information Case at European Court of Justice
- 1992 Maastricht negotiations- Solemn Declaration
- 1992 European Court of Human Rights rules on Article 10 freedom of expression and information sharing
- 2005 A, B and C cases taken to ECHR. D case blocked
- 2010 ECHR unanimously rules that failure to implement existing constitutional right to a lawful abortion in Ireland when woman's life at risk violates Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- Ongoing Debate: e.g. ARC present to EU Parliament .Recent rollback on reproductive rights in some other EU countries e.g. Spain. Collective response important.

# Violence Against Women

- ‘Istanbul Convention ‘
- Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
- Best practice, clear targets and requirements
- Now law in a number of European countries
- EU Victims Directive - potential for fines.
- Ireland must take real steps forward in 2015
- EU level pressure and solidarity important
- Observatory on Violence Against Women
- FRA
- A concerning trend is misuse of ‘gender equity’ frame to dilute representation and funding for VAW work
- Dublin first EU city to sign up to ‘Safer Cities’ initiative

# Family Leave

- Ireland 26 weeks maternity leave paid at low flat rate. Additional 18 weeks unpaid parental leave available.
- Family leave – right to take time off when children are young with job protection - unpaid and at minimum allowed by EU law.
- No legal entitlement to paternity leave in Ireland though many other EU countries offer 2 weeks paid leave following birth.
- Debate around new Family Leave Bill in Ireland
  - NWCI Start Strong and ICTU
  - paid parental leave separate paternity leave
- Debate on Maternity Directives at EU level
  - Parliament call for extension to 20 weeks Commission blocked
  - New Commission indicates willingness to move forward
  - BusinessEurope (IBEC are members) lobby to block extension

# Childcare

- Ireland most expensive childcare in OECD
- Eurostat tells us that we lag behind in EU
- First EU Semester CSR's for Ireland include explicit focus on lack of affordable, accessible childcare
- Makes clear links with women falling out of workforce
- Welcome pressure - important that response focus on long-term public investment.
- **However** EWL analysis, looks at picture across EU and highlights other angles. ECCE investment in own right not simply about women to work. Challenges women as 'second earners' language. Care has value and more men as carers also part of gender equality .

# Intersectional Discrimination

## *Two Examples*

### **Roma and Traveller Women**

“Romani and Traveller women are often exposed to multiple and intersectional discrimination on grounds of gender and ethnic origin and have limited access to employment, education, health, social services and decision-making” **European Women’s Lobby**

### **Migrant Women**

The European Network of Migrant Women (ENoMW) promote the rights and highlight the concerns, needs and interests of migrant women in the EU. Key issues include gender sensitive migration and asylum policies and systems, Gender Based Violence, Racism and vulnerability to precarious work.

AkiDwa and Immigrant Council are members of ENoMW and NWCI

# Global Solidarity

- Where common EU position is taken, capacity for joint civil-society response important. Also question appropriateness of 'common position' if necessary.
- International Development and Negotiation.
- Need for gender analysis around Tax , Trade, Aid.
- UN Reporting Structures and Processes
- Beijing +20
- Need for solidarity within Europe also e.g. Hungary



# Employment and Decent Work

- From marriage bar to equal pay – pressure from Europe all the way.
- Gender Pay Gap is still with us – 13.9% and widens for lower paid
- Increase in low paid insecure work
- Sectors where women predominate at frontline of casualisation.
- Union Rights and Business as powerful lobbies
- Not just jobs but ‘quality jobs’
- Glass ceiling and reinforcing of gendered patterns even in new sectors.
- Unemployment, ‘Activation’ and Emigration
- New Social Insurance Directive for farms and family business.

# Public Procurement

- New EU Public Procurement Directives
  - To be transposed by March 2016
  - Wide Scope for national interpretation
- Protecting public delivery of key Public Services
- Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT)
  - including long term goals like Gender Equality
- Use of Social Clauses and Criteria  
(Inclusion of Gender targets in Social Clauses)
- Accessible, inclusive procurement processes
- Reserved Contracts

# Women in Decision Making

## Women's Voices

- Commission
- Council of Europe
- Parliament  
(Femm Committee)
- Quotas
- Women on Boards
  - BusinessEurope lobbying against board quotas
- Diversity within Women's Voices
- Importance of Consultation

# Gender Mainstreaming

- Gender mainstreaming is requirement within most EU policy and process
- Often not reflected in practice. Box -ticking.
- Lack of clear gender targets or gender analysis
- Blurring of 'gender parity' line sometimes used to avoid fundamental issue of gender inequality.
- Cost seen in less effective policy e.g. health
- Strengthening of good practice requires real pressure egg around EU funding

# NWCI and Europe

- **Better Europe Alliance** (*and Europe 2020*)
  - Lobbying, Awareness Raising, Debate
- **EWL**
  - Lobbying, Information Sharing, Campaigns
  - Recently elected to Executive Steering Group
  - New Strategic Plan in development
- **Funding**
  - Potential for joint applications & projects
- **MEPs**
  - Manifestos, Committees,
- **Commission, Council and EU Presidencies**
- **You !**



## **National Women's Council of Ireland**

100 North King Street  
Dublin 1, Ireland.

**Tel:** +353 1 6790100

**Email:** [alicemaryh@nwci.ie](mailto:alicemaryh@nwci.ie)

**Web :** [www.nwci.ie](http://www.nwci.ie)